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5 A powered wheelchair ramp includes a drive mechanism having a gear, a cam, and a lever arm keyed to a common shaft to prevent relative motion among these elements. An electric motor drives the gear through a clutch and the lever arm raises or lowers a folding ramp. Energy storage  
10 ~~device~~ <sup>means</sup> engage the cam through a follower for storing energy as the ramp is lowered. The energy storage ~~device~~ <sup>means</sup> also damps the motion of the ramp. When the ramp is raised, the energy storage ~~device~~ <sup>means</sup> aids lifting the ramp. The torques applied to the common shaft are such that the net torque in  
15 either direction about the shaft is below a predetermined amount. The result is that the ramp can be raised and lowered easily, even by a single person in a wheelchair sitting beside the ramp. The clutch is released for manual operation and can engage at any point for powered  
20 operation.